

I CLAIM:

1. A method of bone fixation, comprising:

placing respective first and second fasteners through an opening and a slot of a  
5 bone plate and into a first portion of a bone having a discontinuity flanked by the first  
portion and a second portion of the bone, so that the first and second fasteners  
cooperate with the opening and the slot to define a permitted range of motion for the  
bone plate;

securing the bone plate to the second portion of the bone;

10 adjusting an angular disposition of the bone plate relative to the first portion of  
the bone after the steps of placing and securing, thereby adjusting a relative disposition  
of the first and second portions of the bone; and

fixing the angular disposition of the bone plate relative to the first portion of the  
bone.

15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of placing includes placing the  
first and second fasteners into a distal portion of a radius bone.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of placing includes placing the  
20 first fastener in an opening that is not elongate so that translational movement of the  
bone plate relative to the first portion is restricted.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of placing includes (1) a step of placing the first fastener in an opening that is a slot, (2) a step of moving the bone plate translationally relative to the first portion of the bone, and (3) a step of placing the second fastener in a slot after the step of moving.

5

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of placing includes a step of placing first and second fasteners into a bone having first and second portions defined by one of cutting and breaking the bone.

10

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of securing includes a step of placing one or more additional fasteners through the bone plate and into the second portion of the bone.

15

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of adjusting includes a step of pivoting the bone plate about a pivot axis defined by the first fastener.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of adjusting includes a step of manipulating a handle connected to the bone plate to facilitate movement of the bone plate.

20

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of fixing includes a step of tightening the first and second fasteners until they are in pressing contact with the bone plate.

5 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of fixing includes a step of placing one or more additional fasteners through the bone plate and into the first portion of the bone.

11. A method of bone fixation, comprising:

10 placing a first fastener through a first slot of a bone plate and into a first portion of a bone having a discontinuity flanked by the first portion and a second portion of the bone;

moving the bone plate parallel to the first slot to adjust a translational disposition of the bone plate relative to the first portion;

15 introducing a second fastener through a second slot of the bone plate and into the first portion of the bone;

adjusting an angular disposition of the bone plate relative to the first portion of the bone after the steps of placing, moving, and introducing, by movement of the bone plate within a permitted range of motion defined cooperatively by corresponding pairs of  
20 fasteners and slots;

securing the bone plate to the second portion of the bone; and

fixing the angular disposition of the bone plate relative to the first portion of the bone.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of placing including a step of placing a first fastener into a distal portion of a radius bone.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of placing includes a step of placing a first fastener into a bone having first and second portions defined by one of cutting and breaking the bone.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of securing is performed before the step of adjusting.

15. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of fixing includes a step of placing one or more additional fasteners through the bone plate and into the first portion of the bone after the step of adjusting.

16. The method of claim 11, wherein at least one of the steps of moving and adjusting includes a step of manipulating a handle connected to the bone plate to facilitate movement of the bone plate.

17. A method of bone fixation, comprising:

selecting a bone plate defining an opening and a guide slot;

connecting the bone plate to a bone by placing respective first and second fasteners through the opening and the guide slot and into the bone so that the bone plate has an angular disposition relative to the bone;

adjusting the angular disposition by moving the bone plate along a path permitted by relative travel of the second fastener along the guide slot; and

restricting additional movement of the bone plate relative to the bone to fix the angular disposition.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of adjusting includes a step of pivoting the bone plate about an axis defined by the first fastener.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of adjusting includes a step of manipulating a handle connected to the bone plate to facilitate movement of the bone plate.

20. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of selecting includes a step of selecting a bone plate having an axial portion and a transverse portion extending transversely of the axial portion.

21. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of connecting includes a step of connecting the bone plate to a distal portion of a radius bone.

22. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of connecting includes a step of  
5 advancing the first and second fasteners into an incompletely advanced position, and wherein the step of adjusting is performed with the first and second fasteners in the incompletely advanced position.

23. The method of claim 17, the opening being elongate, wherein the step of  
10 adjusting moves the opening translationally relative to the first fastener.

24. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of connecting includes a step of connecting the bone plate to a first portion of the bone, the method further comprising a step of securing the bone plate to a second portion of the bone so that the step of  
15 adjusting creates an adjusted alignment of the first and second portions and the step of restricting fixes the adjusted alignment.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the step of securing is performed after the step of connecting.

26. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of selecting includes a step of selecting a bone plate defining one or more additional openings, and wherein the step of restricting includes a step of placing at least one fastener through the one or more additional openings and into the bone.

5

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the step of placing places the at least one fastener generally between the opening and the guide slot.

28. A method of bone fixation, comprising:

10

selecting a bone plate system, comprising:

(a) a body portion adapted to be secured to a bone, the body portion defining at least one opening for receiving a fastener; and

(b) a handle portion adapted to mount to the body portion to facilitate movement of the body portion relative to the bone while the bone plate is being positioned on a bone;

15

joining the handle portion to the body portion;

connecting the bone plate to a bone by placing at least one fastener through one or more of the at least one opening in the body portion;

adjusting the disposition of the bone plate relative to the bone, or a portion

20

thereof, using the handle portion; and

restricting additional movement of the bone plate relative to the bone to fix the disposition.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the step of selecting a bone plate system includes a step of choosing a body portion in which the at least one opening includes an opening and a guide slot.

5 30. The method of claim 29, wherein the step of connecting includes a step of placing respective first and second fasteners through the opening and the guide slot and into the bone so that the body portion has an angular disposition relative to the bone, and wherein the step of adjusting includes a step of modifying the angular  
10 disposition by moving the body portion along a path permitted by relative travel of the second fastener along the guide slot.

31. The method of claim 29, the guide slot forming an arcuate path centered about the opening, wherein the step of adjusting includes rotating the plate about the opening.

15 32. The method of claim 28, wherein the step of selecting a bone plate system includes choosing a body portion in which the at least one opening includes first and second slots.



33. The method of claim 32, the bone having first and second portions flanked by a discontinuity, wherein the steps of connecting and adjusting include steps of:

placing a first fastener through the first slot and into the first portion of the bone;

moving the body portion parallel to the first slot to adjust a translational

5 disposition of the body portion relative to the first portion;

introducing a second fastener through the second slot and into the first portion of the bone;

adjusting an angular disposition of the body portion relative to the first portion of the bone after the steps of placing, moving, and introducing, by movement of the body

10 portion within a permitted range of motion defined cooperatively by corresponding pairs of fasteners and slots; and

securing the bone plate to the second portion of the bone.

34. The method of claim 28, wherein the step of joining includes a step of  
15 threading the handle portion into the body portion.

35. The method of claim 28, further comprising a step of unjoining the handle from the body portion, after the step of adjusting.

36. A bone plate for bone fixation, comprising:

first and second anchor portions configured to be secured to at least one bone on opposing sides of a discontinuity in the bone, the first anchor portion defining first and second slots and a long axis, the first slot extending at least substantially parallel to the long axis and defining an orthogonal plane, the second slot extending at least substantially normal to the first slot and being generally centered about the orthogonal plane.

37. The bone plate of claim 36, wherein the second slot describes an arc.

38. The bone plate of claim 37, wherein the second slot defines a radius of curvature, and wherein a distance measured from the first slot to the second slot equals the radius of curvature.

39. The bone plate of claim 37, wherein the first anchor portion defines one or more additional openings that are not slots.

40. The bone plate of claim 39, wherein at least one of the one or more additional openings are disposed generally between the first and second slots.

41. The bone plate of claim 36, wherein the first and second anchor portions are configured to be secured to a distal portion of the radius bone, so that the first anchor portion is positioned proximal to the second anchor portion.

5 42. The bone plate of claim 36, wherein the second anchor portion has a greater width than the first anchor portion.

43. The bone plate of claim 36, wherein the second anchor portion includes an inner surface configured to contact the bone, and wherein the inner surface has a  
10 convex transverse curvature.

44. The bone plate of claim 36, wherein the first and second anchor portions define an outer surface, and wherein the outer surface has concave longitudinal curvature.

15 45. The bone plate of claim 36, further comprising:  
a bridge region disposed between the first and second anchor portions; and  
a handle configured to mount to at least one of the first anchor portion, the second anchor portion, and the bridge region, to facilitate movement of the bone plate  
20 during positioning of the bone plate on the bone.

46. A bone plate system for bone fixation, comprising:

a body portion configured to be secured to at least one bone, or portion thereof, the body portion defining (a) at least one opening for receiving a fastener for attaching the bone plate to bone, and (b) a receiver structure for receiving a handle; and

5 a graspable handle configured to be removably mounted to the receiver structure for effecting movement of the body portion relative to the at least one bone, or portion thereof, during positioning of the bone plate on bone.

47. The bone plate system of claim 46, the body portion and the handle  
10 having maximum dimensions representing the greatest linear distance between two points on the body portion and the handle respectively, wherein the maximum dimension of the body portion is less than the maximum dimension of the handle.

48. The bone plate system of claim 46, wherein the handle may be removably  
15 mounted to the receiver structure by threading the handle into the receiver structure.

49. A bone plate for bone fixation, comprising:

first and second anchor portions defining a plurality of openings for receiving fasteners that secure the first and second anchor portions to a bone, at least one of the openings being an opening configured to receive a first fastener placed into the bone and defining a pivot axis for pivotal movement of the plate member on the bone, at least one other of the openings being a guide slot extending in a direction generally transverse of the pivot axis and spaced therefrom so that a second fastener received partially in the guide slot and placed into the bone permits the pivotal movement and defines an angular range therefor in conjunction with the guide slot.

10